
**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF NORTH DAKOTA**

NATIVE AMERICAN GUARDIAN'S
ASSOCIATION

Plaintiff,

v.

WASHINGTON COMMANDERS,
JOSH HARRIS, MATTHEW LAUX, and
THE NATIONAL CONGRESS OF
AMERICAN INDIANS

Defendants.

**DECLARATION OF
GEOFFREY C. BLACKWELL
IN SUPPORT OF THE NATIONAL
CONGRESS OF AMERICAN
INDIANS' MOTION TO DISMISS**

Case No. 3:23-CV-186

Hon. Peter D. Welte

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746, I declare as follows:

1. My name is Geoffrey C. Blackwell. I am the General Counsel and Chief of Staff for the National Congress of American Indians ("NCAI").
2. This Declaration is based upon my personal knowledge and made as a representative of NCAI.
3. In preparing this Declaration, I have relied on my personal knowledge as well as reviewing NCAI organizational records.
4. NCAI is a national non-profit organization founded on the following principles: to secure and preserve American Indian and Alaska Native sovereign rights under treaties and agreements with the United States, as well as under federal statutes, case law, and administration decisions and rulings;

- to protect American Indian and Alaska Native traditional, cultural, and religious rights; to seek appropriate, equitable, and beneficial services and programs for American Indian and Alaska Native governments and people; to promote the common welfare and enhance the quality of life of American Indian and Alaska Native people; and to educate the general public regarding American Indian and Alaska Native governments, people, and rights.
5. NCAI does have tribal and individual members in North Dakota. Currently, the only tribal member is the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians. Out of 1,097 total individual members, NCAI has six individual members who reside in North Dakota.
 6. NCAI has held national meetings in North Dakota, in Bismarck in 1963, 1982, and 2002, and some of its elected officers over the years have been from North Dakota.
 7. NCAI's General Assembly has, at various times in the past, adopted resolutions supporting activities of the federally-recognized Indian tribes in North Dakota, primarily focused at lawmakers or federal agencies in Washington, D.C.
 8. NCAI does not have an organizational presence in North Dakota, has no employees in North Dakota, and does not maintain a place of business in North Dakota.
 9. NCAI does not have or maintain a mailing address, bank account or telephone listing in North Dakota.

10. I have reviewed the Complaint (Doc. 1) filed by the Native American Guardian's Association in the above-captioned matter.
11. The "press release" referred to in the NAGA's Complaint in this matter was a news item posted on NCAI's website, *NCAI Encouraged by Washington Commanders' Decision to Leave the Past Behind* | NCAI. National Congress of American Indians, *NCAI Encouraged by Washington Commanders' Decision to Leave the Past Behind*, NCAI News & Updates (Aug. 30, 2023), <https://archive.ncai.org/news/articles/2023/08/30/ncai-encouraged-by-washington-commanders-decision-to-leave-the-past-behind>.
12. NCAI's website, www.ncai.org, is registered and maintained by NCAI from its headquarters in Washington, D.C.
13. NAGA's Complaint, specifically on page 13 at footnote 6, included a link to the "press release." However, the link is no longer available. A true and correct copy of the entire news item referenced in NAGA's Complaint is attached as **Exhibit A** to this declaration.
14. Exhibit A references a letter sent by NCAI to the Washington Commanders organization. A true and correct copy of the letter referenced in Exhibit A is attached as **Exhibit B**.
15. NCAI has long been involved in efforts to eliminate racist and offensive Native American stereotypes in sports and, particularly, the Washington, D.C. National Football League Club.

16. NCAI has passed a number of resolutions addressing inappropriate representation of Native peoples and cultures since 1950. True and correct copies of some of these resolutions are attached collectively as **Exhibit C**. The resolution numbers included are #49 (1950); #17 (1968); #NV-93-143; #EX DC-93-11; #DEN-94-055; #SD-95-053; #JNU-97-106; #MRB-98-090; #SD-02-051; #TUL-05-087; #ABQ-10-018; #TUL-13-050; #ANC-14-018; #ATL-14-011; #SD-15-041; #MKE-17-029; #DEN-18-044; and #PDX-20-042.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Dated this 1st day of December, 2023.

BY:  _____

Geoffrey C. Blackwell (*Chickasaw, Choctaw, Omaha, Muscogee Creek*)
General Counsel and Chief of Staff
National Congress of American Indians
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